

THE FEMALE OF *PACHYNEMATUS SULCATUS* BENSON 49  
represent an undescribed species). I do believe, however, that it offers a much better solution to the problem than Benson's (1967) paper.

The large number of recent additions and alterations made by Benson to the British list of *Pachynematus* are scattered in several separate papers. The necessity of consulting these renders Benson's (1958) key very difficult to use. Hellen's (1974) key contains fuller descriptions of many British species and it is very useful for clarifying some of the more difficult parts of Benson's key. Worthy of note is Hellen's synonymy of *Pachynematus glabriceps* Lindqvist, 1949 (introduced to the British list by Benson, 1964) under *P. parvilabris* (Thomson, 1871).

### Acknowledgements

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### References

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- Legend for plate.
- Fig. 1. *Pachynematus sulcatus* Benson, ♂.
- Fig. 2. *P. ? sulcatus*, ♀.

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SURGICAL SPIRIT AS A RELAXING AGENT. — Having had problems with mould in relaxing tins, I tried using water mixed with a small amount of surgical spirit in my relaxing tin. This proved to be most effective; as well as preventing mould, this mixture has the advantage of relaxing very quickly, 24 hours being sufficient for all but the largest insects. I have even used this relaxant on dried and crumpled leaves prior to pressing them, again with great success. — P. J. JOHNSON, 7 Haverhill Road, Horseheath, Cambridge, CB1 6QR. 23.xii.1979.

ORTHOSIA STABILIS D. & S. IN DECEMBER. — As the weather had been quite mild, I decided to put the light trap out in the garden on 25th December 1979, just to see what was around. By the following morning five *Erannis defoliaria* Clerck and, much to my surprise, a single male *Orthosia stabilis* had turned up. This, I believe, is not the first time an *Orthosia* species has occurred at this time of year though I have never seen a documented case of this before. — M. PARSONS, The Forge, Russells Green, Ninfield, Battle, East Sussex.